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## Reserve PRESENTATION CEREMONIES MEMORIAL TABLET TO GEORGE HAROLD POWELL

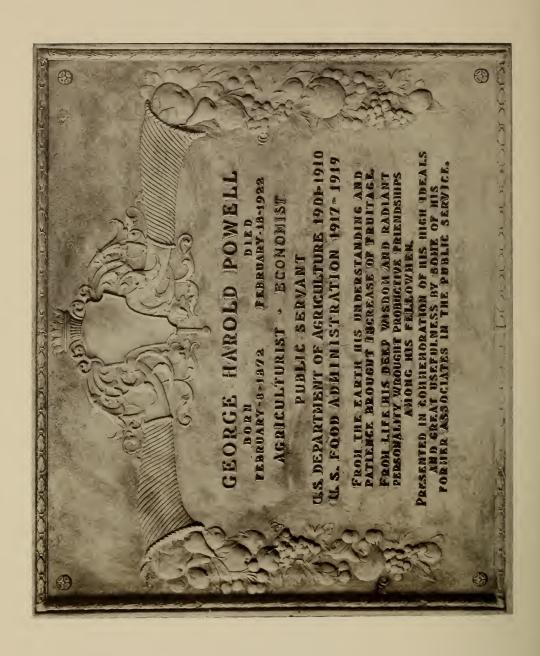
WASHINGTON, D.C. APRIL TWENTY-FIFTH NINETEEN HUNDRED TWENTY-THREE











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#### PRESENTATION OF MEMORIAL TABLET

OF THE LATE

#### GEORGE HAROLD POWELL

TO THE

#### UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

BY THE FORMER MEMBERS OF THE
DIVISION OF PERISHABLE FOODS
OF THE

UNITED STATES FOOD ADMINISTRATION

ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
WASHINGTON, D. C.
APRIL TWENTY-FIFTH, NINETEEN HUNDRED TWENTY-THREE



# UNVEILING OF MEMORIAL TABLET HONORING GEORGE HAROLD POWELL

ADMINISTRATION BUILDING DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

APRIL TWENTY-FIFTH
NINETEEN HUNDRED TWENTY-THREE

HON. HENRY C. WALLACE PRESIDING

SECRETARY WALLACE: My friends, we are gathered here today to present and receive a memorial tablet by the associates of G. Harold Powell in some phases of his public work. The tablet has been placed on the wall in the entrance of this building and will be unveiled after the presentation has been made and the tablet has been accepted. The first remarks will be made by the Secretary of Commerce, Hon. Herbert Hoover.

SECRETARY HOOVER: Mr. Wallace and friends, I feel that this is a tribute not in so large a sense as many of us would like to see to Harold Powell. Nevertheless, it does mark the heartfelt appreciation of the many men who served with him in his many public activities, many before the war, those of myself and my own immediate associates during the war, and many of the members of this Department in his public relationships since the war.

My own association with him began in 1917, when it became necessary to assemble the best of our American men to administer one of the most difficult problems of the war—the problem of Food Administration. Mr. Powell was the second member of the Food Administration staff chosen because of his outstanding fitness and position. As in every case of a call on Mr. Powell, he abandoned all his own personal interests; he came to the service of his country; and devoted himself throughout the entire war to a work of overwhelming difficulties and anxiety. He was in charge of the entire distribution of perishable goods. To protect the grocer, to secure service to the consumer in that time of reduced transportation and shortage of men, to do so without interference with the direct war services was a task that could never have been compassed but for his great executive abilities and his wonderful knowledge.

He possessed in rare degree not only a sense of service himself but an extraordinary quality of summoning from other men unquestioning loyalty and devotion.

Mr. Powell's public services did not begin nor end with the war. On every important national occasion when problems of food and agriculture have been under discussion, Mr. Powell has been the outstanding man upon whom the Government and the public have relied. His was a lovable character, a great heart, a fine mind—a great American. To mark the place where he served in so many years in constructive work for the public interest by this memorial is not only fitting but is the least of tributes we can pay to so great a public servant of America.

SECRETARY WALLACE: The tablet will be presented by Mr. Frank A. Horne, Chairman of the Committee representing former members of the Division of Perishable Foods of the Food Administration.

MR. FRANK A. HORNE: Mr. Secretary Wallace, Mr. Secretary Hoover, Ladies and Gentlemen.

Before I voice the words of formal presentation of the memorial, as Chairman of the Committee, I desire to read a telegram which has just been received from the Directors of the California Fruit Growers' Exchange, and signed by Mr. E. G. Dezell, General Manager.

"Through this official expression of its Board of Directors, the friends and coworkers of G. Harold Powell in the California Fruit Growers' Exchange desire to participate in your memorial to his spirit and work, and pay their

tribute of love and appreciation.

"Mr. Powell's humanity and life principle of service found their expression and fulfillment in bringing to fuller fruition cooperation in the marketing of citrus fruits in California. During the ten years of his wise and farseeing leadership, the continued success and steady growth of the Exchange proved an incentive to other agricultural industries to solve their common problems through intelligent collective effort, and many were the cooperative enterprises, not only in this, but in distant lands that were safely guided by his discriminating counsel. Within the organization by his devotion to and faith in the growers, united with keen business insight and sure judgment, Mr. Powell won the confidence and esteem of our membership, and by his gentle courtesy and radiant disposition, the allegiance and affection of those members and employees with whom he was more closely associated. His many valuable contributions to cooperative literature culminated in an address before the National Agricultural Conference, in Washington, D. C., less than a month before his passing; the predominating notes being mutual faith, efficiency in organization and operation, and a square deal to the grower, the intermediary, and the public at large. The influence of such a man is never ending; the fragrance of his life abides; his work lives on, translated in the lives of those whom he inspired and taught. Great is our loss, but greater still our heritage."

> (Signed) E. G. Dezell, General Manager, California Fruit Growers' Exchange.

Secretary Wallace, it is my high honor, on this occasion, to speak for one of the many groups which had

intimate association with Harold Powell during his public career. The former members of the Division of Perishable Foods of the United States Food Administration, in arranging for the Memorial Tablet which is to be unveiled today, really represent the larger circle of all those who had the inestimable privilege of personal contact with Mr. Powell in the wide range of his public and private activities.

It is eminently fitting that this emblem of affectionate tribute should be presented to the United States of America and have a permanent place in the Administration Building of the Department of Agriculture. Thus shall the vast number of citizenry who Mr. Powell served so unselfishly in the domain of Agriculture, but who knew not their benefactor, receive and own this testimonial, through these distinguished representatives of their government.

Upon the tablet you will read:

"From the Earth His understanding and patience brought increase of fruitage.

From life his deep wisdom and radiant personality wrought productive friendships among his fellowmen."

These words, which will be perpetuated in bronze, set forth strikingly the product of a great life and the impress of a superb soul.

The spiritual quality of the life we are holding in remembrance was the essence of his personality and the spring of his abiding influence. The explanation of this notable man with his splendid endowments of mind and heart and his superior accomplishments was that he possessed a great soul and was dominated by a passion for service. It mattered not whether his vocation was under private or public auspices, his motive was to make a maximum contribution to the common welfare, using the place he occupied as the instrument and opportunity of

rendering service. He had the vision to recognize that ultimate success could not be achieved by seeking selfish or material objectives but by a ministry of creative work which should bring forth the greatest good to the greatest number and add to the sum total of human progress and achievement. This spirit he communicated to all of receptive temper with whom he was associated, and by rare tact and ability to direct and lead he lifted others to higher ideals and purposes, so that unanimity of action was accomplished in difficult situations.

It is most appropriate that we should be gathered here at the seat of government of the country he loved and served so splendidly and at this place significant because of the major contribution of his life as agriculturist and economist. Is not the glory, fragrance, and promise of this springtime season in beautiful Washington a prophetic visualization of the new and ampler life of the one we "have loved long since and lost awhile"?

Permit me, Mr. Secretary, on behalf of the innumerable company of those with whom he labored and for whom he toiled, near and far, known and unknown, to present to the United States Department of Agriculture the bronze tablet to the memory of George Harold Powell.

SECRETARY WALLACE: Mr. Horne, and your associates who have joined in presenting this tablet to the Department.

It is with deep satisfaction that on behalf of the Department of Agriculture I have the honor of accepting this beautiful tablet which you have caused to be made and present as a memorial to the life and service of our departed friend and co-worker, Harold Powell. It seems especially fitting that it should have a permanent place in this Department, where much of his most important pioneer research work was done, and where it will serve as an inspiration to the thousands of other devoted men who are laboring in the fields of scientific research.

If our friend could be with us today he would be

deeply sensible of the tribute thus paid to him, but I sure he would find equal satisfaction in the thought that it is as well an appreciation of the value of faithful labor in the field of applied science which too seldom has been recognized in this particular way. As we go about our cities we find many enduring memorials erected to perpetuate the memory of individuals who have served their country in times of national peril. Their names are emblazoned on our public buildings. Much less frequently do we find similar tributes to that great army of devoted men whose quiet labors in laboratory and field have laid the foundation for an enduring nation and have contributed so much to the comfort and wholesomeness of life. I would not say anything or do anything which might in any possible way detract from the honor we pay or the esteem in which we hold the names of those who have served our nation in times of war, but surely it is no less fitting that we should do like honor to those equally devoted men who have served so well in constructive effort.

The worthy qualities of the great teacher are known to those who sit under him, and in whose lives his own ideals are perpetuated and multiplied through succeeding generations. The work of the scientist serves as an inspiration and guide to those who serve with and come after him, and is preserved in manuscripts and books, thus adding to our store of fundamental knowledge. But it is eminently proper and fitting that the names of those who have rendered unusual service, as in the case of Harold Powell, should also be preserved in enduring bronze and placed where they can be seen, that the passers-by may ever be reminded that they lived and worked and served and thus enriched our national life and contributed in a large way to national progress.

The man in whose honor we are gathered today served in an unusual way. In childhood and youth he acquired that knowledge of the practical problems of agriculture and that keen personal interest in rural life

which must come through close contact with the soil. He was well schooled and trained in his University courses and became keenly interested in a wide range of scientific He spent some years in teaching and in technical research and entered the Department Agriculture in its then newly organized Bureau of Plant Industry in the year 1901. Almost at once he became a strong leader and unifying force in the field of biological research, with special reference to the solution of the complex problems involved in the storage, handling, and distribution of perishables. It was a comparatively new field of research, but one which required prompt and effective exploration because of the growing number of producers and consumers and of the heavy losses resulting between the field and the table. Mr. Powell's great service grew out of his sound training and his ability to see that the solution of those problems which were under investigation could come only through a study of the entire industry, from the growing plant to the ripened fruit on the consumer's table. In the case of citrus fruits, with which so much of his work was concerned, it was necessary to know the condition of the fruit on the trees, its treatment through the processes of picking, sizing, packing, transporting, and final distribution, and only a man of his unusual breadth of mind could have rendered the service required. It was necessary to develop efficient and loyal team work among the scientific specialists in various related fields and to make a practical application of scientific knowledge to the processes of production, packing, transporting, and marketing.

Only those who are familiar with conditions as they existed at that particular time can fully appreciate the obstacles which Mr. Powell overcame. It was necessary to enlist the active and effective cooperation of men and interests in many different lines of endeavor. It was at a time of strained feeling between the transportation interests, for example, and the general public, and especially between the transportation interests and the

Federal administration then in power. It was no easy task, therefore, to bring about the sort of cooperation necessary, and the success with which he accomplished it is a fine tribute to the tactfulness, sincerity of purpose, and high character of the man as well as of the scientist.

In research, both as individual investigator and director, he was thorough and remarkably keen of perception in locating fundamental objectives and persistent in pursuing them. The attractive bypaths which so frequently allure the investigator from the rough and hard main road did not interest him. He was an accurate appraiser of the character and qualifications of men, and especially of young men. He had rare capacity for leadership through reason and for the application of the results of technical research to practical affairs in a common sense way. He directed through suggestion rather than by order, and every worker of his staff was an associate rather than a subordinate. The will to cooperate was a matter almost of religious import to him, and in consequence he became everywhere a unifying as well as an organizing force in the fields where his lot was cast. This was conspicuously true of his participation in the Agricultural Conference here in Washington in January, 1922, but a few weeks before his lamented death.

As he said in appreciation of an old friend for whose ideals and achievements in the interest of humanity he had very high regard, "He became great because he worked for a result and not a reward."

This beautiful and imperishable evidence of your affection for and admiration of our departed associate will be cherished by the Department and its workers. It is a deserved and appropriate recognition of the life and work of a really great man who served faithfully and well.

UNVEILING OF THE TABLET....Dr. W. A. Taylor.

Chief, Bureau of Plant Industry.









